

You will inveigh against the worthlessness of "things,"  
buy every egg-peeler, every pewter frog.  
Time will prove most of your dire predictions true.  
About the rest, you'll sigh and say "Just wait and see."

You will impress with your perspicacity.  
You may be taken for a seer.  
You will be blessed with endless invention.  
You will never be at a loss for words.

— Charles Webb

Los Angeles CA

#### SOMETIMES MARRIED GUYS GET PHONE CALLS LIKE THIS AT NIGHT FROM THEIR UNMARRIED FRIENDS

Got a call from Larry out in Victorville. Says the high desert doesn't agree with his sinuses, says he'll be rollin' back into town soon. Just might have (if you can believe it) worn out his welcome at his brother Skip's house due to an incident at the nudist colony, something to do with a young girl (I'm not givin' you details; it was a misunderstanding) that caused Skip to be put on probation with those good folks and caused Larry to be banned from the place for life.

Anyway, Larry says he'll be rollin' in in a day or two, wonders if he might drop by for supper. I told him sure, sounds great. When I hung up, Monica rolled over and said, "That asshole's not spending one night under this roof, and if you won't tell him I will."

#### LARRY'S BACK IN TOWN

The wife had said, "Just dinner, then he's back out on the street again." But Larry's out in the kitchen talkin' shit to her, making her laugh as she stirs the gravy, spoons rice into a serving bowl.

"Hey, lovebirds," I call out to them. "Outa there with the food, goddam it. I'm a hungry man." They have had, those two, carnal knowledge of each other, a bump-and-go affair 18 or 19 years ago, before she and I got hitched, when we all ran together as a crowd.

The wife squeals and lunges out of the kitchen with the pork chops, goosed or pinched on the butt is my guess.



Larry slinks out behind her with a bowl of steaming broccoli. He is grinning like a pervert and there is a rash-like blush on his neck. "Your wife says she's movin' you an' her onto the sofa so I can have the master bedroom, but I say nonsense; just move the kid in with you guys so I can have her room."

My wife and I say, in unison, "Fuck you, Larry," and my wife continues the sentiment by tacking on the book end, "Just fuck you."

## I GOT THE BLUES

A soap opera on T.V.; my wife and her mother agree that the girl with the crisp blonde hair is ugly. The man in the eye patch doesn't think so. He cups her chin in his gnarled hand and kisses her lightly.

"Ugly."

"Ugly."

The tea kettle whistles. My wife silences it and pours two cups. She delivers one to Mom.

I step out into the patio; my neighbor has blown another hole through the redwood fence with his big, loud .45. The slug entered his side and left a small, clean hole. On my side, the wood is shattered and torn. My dog lies dead on the lawn. I step back into the house. The man with the eye patch has the blonde lady pushed down on the couch. Her dress is bunched around her waist, but the panty hose are still in place. The man is working, one handed, on his belt. I walk to the kitchen and pull a plastic trash bag from the drawer. I carry it back outside, lift my dog by its hind leg and drop her in. Then I drop the bag into the trash can.

## LA BREA BLUES

I stopped by the Loma Alta Cafe for coffee and toast. Betty, the one-breasted waitress, poured me a cup of java that gave new meaning to the word "black."

It looked like used motor oil. Ever try the trick; you lay a paper clip flat on the surface tension of a glass of water and